Five Steps for Schools

1. **Clearly define bullying behavior, including harassment, and cyber-bullying.**
    Sample Definitions:
    *   Bullying is negative, often repeated behavior with the intent to hurt someone physically or emotionally and involves an imbalance of power (physical size, social status) between the aggressor(s) and the target(s).
    *   Cyber-bullying is the use of cell phones, texting, social networking sites, email, or other electronic media to harass, threaten or intimidate someone.
        Adapted from www.bullyingprevention.org

2. **Establish clear policies and procedures for how your school will address bullying behavior.**
    *   Sample Policy: While Montana is one of only two states that do not legally require schools to have anti-bullying policies, school districts are required by the Board of Public Education to have an anti-bullying policy. For a model policy your district can use, click here:

    *   Build Awareness and Skills: Provide training for teachers, staff, (bus drivers, lunch room attendants, playground supervisors) students, and parents that includes what bullying is, how to prevent it and appropriate intervention.

    *   *For a list of resources of bullying prevention and intervention strategies click on the Resources tab.*

3. **Make bullying prevention and intervention an essential part of the school environment.**
    *   Get People Involved - Form a team or give an existing team responsibility for coordinating the school's bullying prevention efforts. Make sure the team includes administrators, teachers, school staff, students and community members.

    *   Know the Status Quo - Conduct a survey to analyze the current level of reported bullying behavior at the school.

    *   *Click here to find out more about the My Voice survey.*

    *   An Ounce of Prevention is Worth…. - Start bullying prevention and intervention education early. Begin teaching students in kindergarten or elementary school; don't wait until middle school.

    *   It's Everyone's Business - Train school personnel and students in appropriate ways to respond when they observe bullying. For helpful information on appropriate intervention strategies go to www.stopbullying.gov *or click on the resources tab link*

4. **Promote a safe school and classroom culture where educators model positive behavior.**

- Conduct regular assessments of the school culture and track the reported incidents of bullying.

- Require faculty and staff to model the same positive behaviors expected of students with one another and with students.

- Provide on-going training for school staff.

- Increase adult supervision in areas identified as "hot spots" such as hallways between classes, playground, the lunch room and bus stops.

- Commit to bullying prevention for the long term. Successful prevention efforts are an on-going part of the school curriculum and culture.

5. **Know How to Report Bullying Incidences**

- Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians or others and may be oral or written depending on the severity of the bullying incident.

- Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously.

- Identify a person who is the point of contact at the school for parents, students, teachers and staff who need to take additional steps in reporting and/or intervention.

- Make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a voicemail box and a suggestion box.

- Depending on the severity of the incident, the school may also need to contact law enforcement authorities.

Link to the incident reporting forms
Additional resources on reporting at www.stopbullying.gov